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ABSTRACT

The concept of a "bilingual district" (localized area in which the main language is different from surrounding districts) has been inherent in Canada's official policy for the last ten years. However, sociopolitical changes since the passage of the Official Languages Act of 1974, especially the election of a separatist government in Quebec, have severely reduced the usefulness of the concept. Objections to bilingual districts have come from individual communities as well as provincial governments: problems are anticipated ranging from difficulties in administering programs for minorities to disharmony among the various populations. Maps, tables, and statistics reinforce the awareness that a very complex situation has been oversimplified in the name of legislative convenience. In order to meet the real needs of language minority populations, a great deal more time and effort will have to be expended in assessing the individual character of each geographic-sociopolitical situation. (JB)

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BILINGUAL DISTRICTS : THE ELUSIVE TERRITORIAL COMPONENT IN CANADA'S OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

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> If there is one subject in the history of Canada that has had more discussion than any other, except for Confederation itself, it has been the question of bilingualism in Canada.[1]

The author of this statement could have extended his horizon to include many nations of the world. Canada is not the only country that has wrestled with this vexing social and cultural problem. In his presentation of the Adair Memorial lectures at McGill University, Montreal in 1966, Professor William Mackey developed the theme that bilingualism was not exceptional but was a problem that affected the majority of the world's population.[2] Relative to the duration of the bicultural problems of other nations, particularly in Europe, the resolution of Canada's century-old controversy must seem to be in a stage of early maturity.

This century-old "discussion" culminated in Canada with the promulgation of the Official Languages Act in 1969.[3] This Act was formulated from the recommendations that were provided by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.* Appointed in 1963, this commission of enquiry was directed to investigate and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to bring forth recommendations to develop the Canadian confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between what was termed "the two founding races" -- the English and the French.[4] It was directed to take into consideration the contribution made by "other" ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and to recommend measures to safeguard that contribution. It is the intent of the author to examine the relevance of one concept that was brought forth by the Commission, that of bilingual districts; a concept to

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* The popular reference to this body of enquiry in Canada has become the B. and B. Commission.

which the government of Canada was committed when a language policy for the country was drafted.

As a working hypothesis the B. and B. Commission established that a bilingual country would not be considered one in which it would be necessary for all citizens to speak two languages; rather it would be founded upon institutional bilingualism. It would be a country in which the principal public and private institutions would provide services in two languages to citizens, many of whom would be bilingual. The members of the Commission investigated problems and policies in several nations that had to contend with language conflicts in order to provide guiding principles for Canadian bilingualism. After reviewing the bilingual structure in Belgium, Finland, Switzerland and South Africa, the members isolated two factors that were influential in determining an institutional form of language equality. The geographical distribution of the linguistic groups and the level of individual bilingualism among citizens were considered germane to language policy. Each influenced the formation of a policy that was based upon the principle of territoriality or the principle of personality.

The principle of territoriality, under which an individual has the right to receive services in his/her own language within certain defined districts, was found to be appropriate when a bilingual country consisted of clearly defined unilingual regions, as in Belgium and Switzerland, or had only a few regions that were linguistically mixed as in Finland. Where the members of two language groups were not so concentrated, as in South Africa, the principle of personality, according to which every person is free to obtain services in the language of his choice throughout the state, was more appropriate. A high pro-

portion of the South African population was competent in the two official languages, English and Afrikaans. It was the combination of geographical distribution and bilingual competence that made the application of the personality principle feasible in this African state. For Canada the principle was not considered pertinent since the distributional pattern of the two ethnic populations, although nation wide, was fairly well defined (figs. 1 and 2). Furthermore, only 12% of the Canadian population claimed to be bilingual in 1961 compared to 66% of the South African white population. In the European countries linguistic frontiers had become relatively permanent, thereby providing credibility to the territorial principle, whereas in Canada the dominant feature that confronted the Commission and thwarted a rigid adaptation of this principle was the mobility of the population. For this reason it was deemed unrealistic to adopt either principle in a strict fashion. Although no model was forthcoming and neither principle of language policy suited the Canadian context precisely, the Commission relied heavily upon the policies and programmes of Finland.

Basic to the many recommendations of the B. and B. Commission was the formal recognition of French and English as official languages of the Parliament of Canada, of the federal courts, of the federal government, and of the federal administration. To attain equality, the recognition of both official languages in law and in practice was urged "...whenever the minority is numerous enough to be viable as a group".[5] In this manner the Commission approximated the language policy of Finland whereby administrative divisions would be declared to be unilingual or officially bilingual depending upon the proportion of minority population to total population.

The B. and B. Commission provided the federal government with recom-

mendations that were founded upon research submissions and nation-wide public hearings. As a consequence of these recommendations the government formulated its language policy and, in 1969, the Official Languages Act of Canada was promulgated in which French and English were accorded equal status as official languages of the Parliament and Government of Canada. The national significance of this statute, in the view of the government, was expressed by the Minister for Secretary of State when it was before the House of Commons.

> The measure is extremely important in the view of the government because it touches the very foundation of Canadian unity -- this bill is a gesture of faith in the future of Canada.[6]

In taking this stance the government had rejected the proposition of uniformity whereby the government in Ottawa was to be an English-speaking government. Adherents to this policy had based their arguments on the assumption that no central government could represent its citizens as a whole for the French and English communities were totally different and devoid of common interests. In the opinion of the government such a concept "...that unity demands and presupposes uniformity..."[7] would have condemned French-speaking communities beyond the province of Quebec to assimilation and oblivion (figs. 1 and 2). The integrity of these minority communities, English within Quebec and French in the other nine provinces, had been an important consideration when the legislation was drafted.

The basic extension of language rights contained within the Act provided that all official documents that were issued by the Parliament or Government of Canada, by a federal Court or by any government body whatsoever

were to be published in both languages. Provision was made to ensure that all departments and agencies of the Canadian government, federal courts, quasi-judicial and administrative bodies and Crown Corporations would be capable of conducting relations with the public in both official languages. Such services were to be available to travelling citizens within Canada and abroad in embassies, trade commissions, and consulates. Persons testifying before federal agencies and all courts were to be allowed to do so in both official languages. To ensure that these services were available to the public and that the spirit of the law and the intention of the legislators were followed the government created the office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. The Commissioner was to be a servant of parliament and, therefore, not subject to the direct authority of the executive branch of government. As a guardian of the language rights of citizens, in their dealings with Parliament or the federal government, he was to function as a "linguistic ombudsman".[8]

To assure official-language communities that the system of language services would be applied in its entirety throughout the nation the government adopted the recommendation of the B. and B. Commission to create bilingual districts. In drafting this concept the Commission emphasized the method employed in Finland, under the territorial principle, whereby local government units, the commune, were declared officially bilingual if the minority population constituted 10% of the total population or at least 5,000 persons. If the proportion of the minority were smaller, the commune was declared unilingual in the language of the majority -- Finnish or Swedish. For Finland this had apparently worked well for the minority Swedish-speaking population was concentrated in coastal areas, in only a few cities and towns and was relatively static.[9]

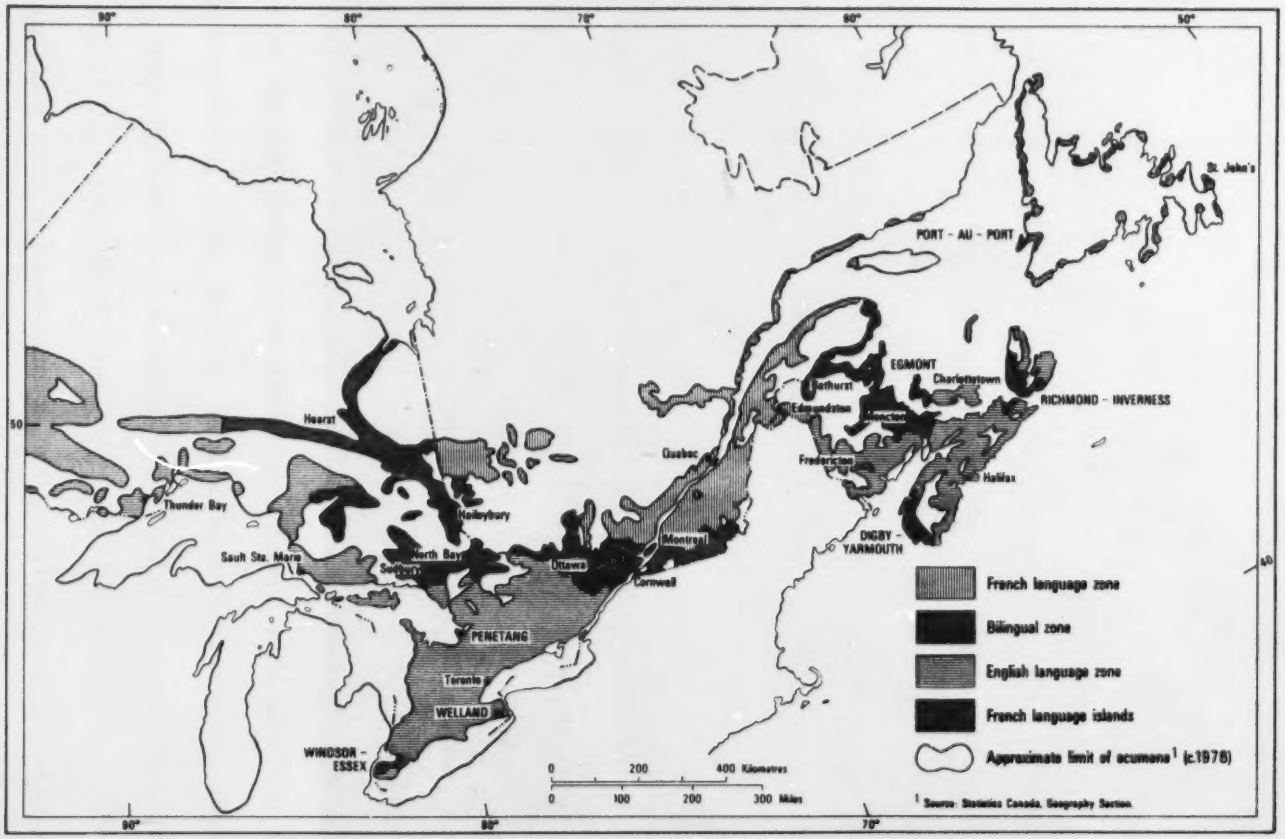

Figure 1. Language zones in central and eastern Canada, 1976.

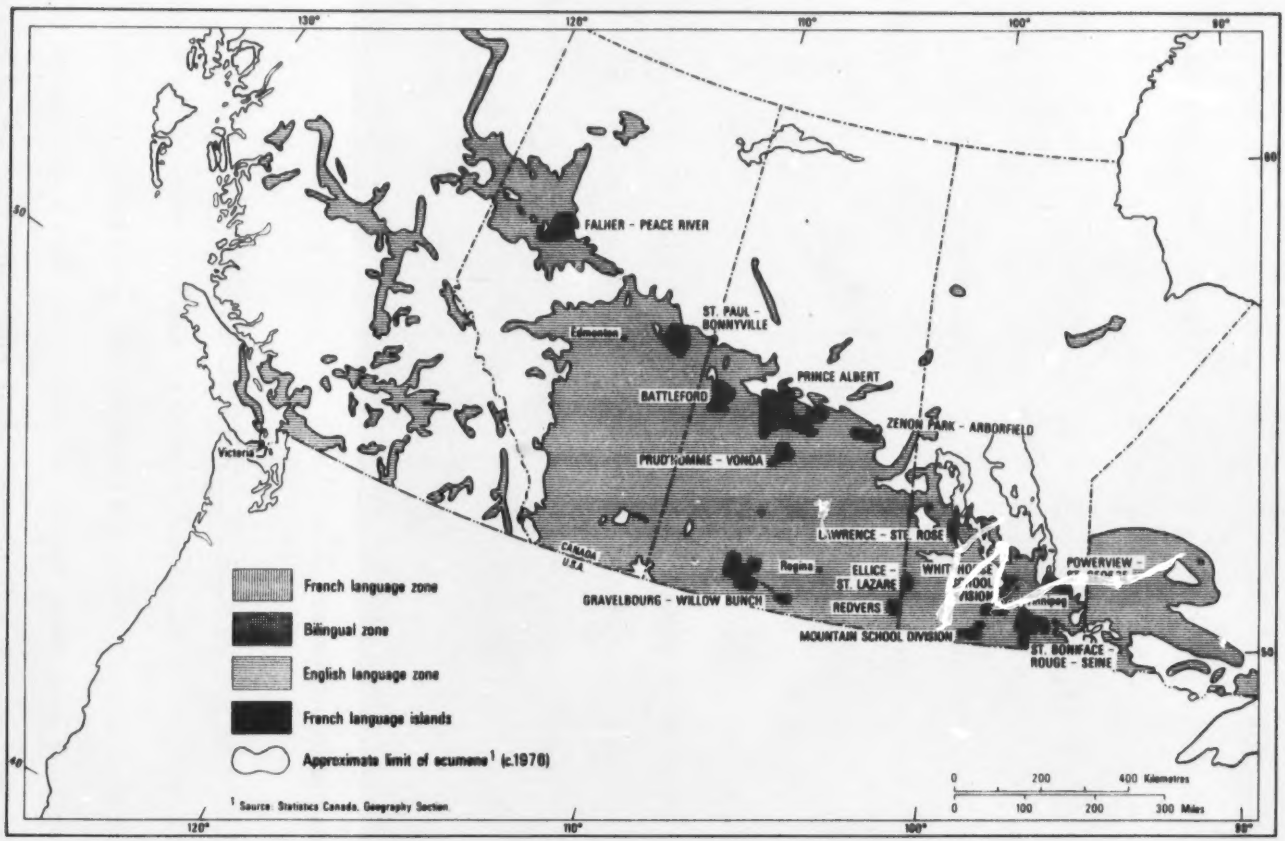

Figure 2. Language zones in western Canada, 1976.

Unlike the patterns of population distribution in Finland, however, minority-language communities in Canada were dispersed and their population was relatively mobile.[10] For those reasons the boundaries for bilingual districts in Canada were to be more flexible. Although the Official Languages Act adopted the 10% proportion of minority to total population, it was specified that decennial boundary adjustments would accommodate changes in population distribution. Consequently the bilingual district was to be delineated by reference to the boundaries, "of any or all of the following, namely, a census district...a local government or school district or region or a federal or provincial electoral district."[11]

Considered as one of the cornerstones of the Act, the bilingual district was to be the territorial unit in which people would be entitled to obtain full services from the federal government and its agencies in either French or English. Furthermore, a district was to be created after consultation with government officials at the lower levels, provincial and municipal, and it was hoped that services from these levels would eventually emulate the pattern set by the government of Canada.[12]

Regional Reactions to the Concept of Bilingual Districts

The concept of bilingual districts was not universally accepted by elected representatives in Canada although it was eventually incorporated into the Act. Objections that were raised reflected the sectional nature of the country and the patterns of ethnic settlement that were neither predominantly English nor French. At the time that the Bill was in second reading in the House, representation was made to a special committee that had been assigned to

review all sections of the Bill. The premier of the Province of Quebec claimed that if the concept of bilingual districts was to be the sole means of assuring services to minorities, the effect would be to establish ghettos for all French Canadians outside Quebec.[13] In the opinion of the Government of Quebec the rigid application of districts was incompatible with the urban trend in Canada where people were leaving a homogenous rural environment to live in a heterogenous urban milieu. Members of Parliament who represented electoral districts in western Canada advised the Committee that in a multicultural environment, the dominant cultural characteristic of this region of Canada (table 1), bilingual districts would create disharmony and, rather than enhance national unity, they would generate unrest and ethnic discord.

> Bilingual districts will obviously lead to ghettos which will engender problems similar to those on Indian reservations -- this issue has raised a strong reaction from the other western ethnic groups.[14]

The data in tables 1 and 2 demonstrate the situation that elected representatives tried to emphasize before the committee. For example, of the entire population of Canada who were of Ukrainian ethnic origin, 68% lived in the four western provinces of Canada. For those of Scandinavian ethnic origin, 79% were in the west while for those of German and Polish origin the figures were 56% and 45% respectively. The magnitude of these ethnic concentrations meant that several groups, other than British or French, had sufficient population to support and patronize cultural activities such as ethnic clubs, weekly newspapers and annual celebrations. The activities of such organizations had assisted in the perpetuation of ethnic awareness in western Canada. There

TABLE 1

Percentage Distribution of the Population by
Specific Ethnic Groups, Western Canada
1971 - 1976

ORIGIN	Manitoba		Saskatchewan		Alberta		British Columbia	
	percentage provincial population	percentage of ethnic population	percentage provincial population	percentage of ethnic population	percentage provincial population	percentage of ethnic population	percentage provincial population	percentage of ethnic population
British Isles	41.9	4.3	42.1	4.1	46.8	7.9	58.0	13.2
French	8.8	1.4	6.1	0.9	5.8	1.5	4.4	1.6
German	12.5	9.3	19.5	13.7	14.2	17.5	15.1	15.1
Ukrainian	11.6	19.7	9.3	14.8	8.3	23.3	2.8	10.4
Scandinavian	3.6	9.1	6.4	15.4	6.0	25.6	5.1	29.1
Polish	4.3	13.5	2.9	8.5	2.7	14.0	1.4	9.3

Source: Census of Canada, Population Data.

TABLE 2

Numerical Distribution of the Population by Specified Ethnic Groups, Western Canada 1976

	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia
Total Population	988,245	926,245	1,627,875	2,184,620
British Isles	414,125	390,190	761,665	1,265,460
French	86,510	56,200	94,665	96,550
German	123,065	180,095	231,010	198,310
Ukrainian	114,410	85,920	135,510	60,145
Scandinavian	35,110	59,105	98,430	112,125
Polish	42,700	26,910	44,325	29,545

Source: Census of Canada, Population Data.

was a fear that the creation of bilingual districts, particularly within the three prairie provinces, would be looked upon as special treatment by the federal government for an ethnic group that was neither as numerous nor more concentrated than people of Ukrainian, German or Scandinavian origin. Furthermore, the francophones had only a shared claim to pioneer development of the Prairies, unlike their dominant role in much of eastern Canada.[15]

Criticism that Bill C-120 in general and bilingual districts in particular would be prejudicial to the language and culture of other ethnic groups also arose during the debates in the House of Commons. Several members of the government countered this argument by referring to a clause in the Bill that nothing in the pending legislation could affect "...the acquired rights and privileges of the other languages...".[16] It was explained that one purpose of the Bill was to extend and strengthen the rights and privileges of citizens who were of "other" ethnic origin. Before the courts those who did not understand or speak French or English would retain the right to call for an interpreter. The government assured the House that the Bill would not interfere with the existence of municipal or parochial schools that operated in a language other than French or English.

The government faced a dilemma. Without bilingual districts the Bill was in danger of appearing empty to the francophone population of Canada; void of spirit and purpose. To persist would possibly alienate many of the people of western Canada who were neither English nor French in ethnic origin. It was obvious from all exchanges, however, that the concept of bilingual districts was vital to government policy. Language legislation could not achieve full application without them.[17] Furthermore, it was the position of the government that districts would accommodate the rising expectations of the francophone

population of Canada; an expectation cogently expressed before the Select Committee by a representative from Quebec.

> All you have to do is walk around in Quebec to see what I think the government wants to obtain. Come to Trois Rivieres, Cap de la Madelaine, or La Tuque; where in La Tuque less than 1% of the people is English-speaking. Go to the city of Quebec where there are 2% or 3% and then go to any federal government (office) and you have available services in the two languages. I think that in Quebec we have an example in the federal administration of what the French speaking people would like to have provided throughout Canada. It is as simple as that. Wherever you go in Quebec, even if you do not have the 10% minimum, any federal service, railway station, airport offices of the federal government and you are certain to get an answer, to get information in the language of your choice. We would like the same thing from one end of Canada to the other.[18]

The solution to the issue was to maintain those clauses that dealt with the formation of bilingual districts and satisfy the former but to introduce a type of flexibility clause whereby services could be provided without the designation of a district, thereby diffusing the "ghetto" arguments of western representatives. Unfortunately, article 9(2), the flexibility clause, neither tempered the apprehensions of western representatives nor provided the commission responsible for recommending the location of districts with a manageable alternative to the concept of bilingual districts.[19]

The Use of Census Data in the Designation of Bilingual Districts

Once the Special Committee had submited its report, the Official

Languages Bill passed third reading in the House of Commons and received unanimous support from all political parties. Under the auspices of article 14(1) of the Act, persons were selected from across the country, "...as being representative of residents of the several provinces or principle regions of Canada..." to constitute a Bilingual Districts Advisory Board.[20] The members of the Board were required to consider any region in Canada where the official-language minority constituted at least ten per cent of the total population by mother tongue for possible designation as a bilingual district.[21] Their recommendations were to be submitted directly to cabinet.

According to the mandate the designation of districts was to be based upon the distribution of mother-tongue population alone. According to the definition used in the census of Canada, mother tongue was the language first learned and still understood. Nothing in the definition referred to the respondent's ability to speak the language first learned. This placed some limitations upon the members of the second Board as other language-related data became available to them and cross tabulations provided further information particularly related to language usage that made decisions, based upon patterns of a single statistical population, questionable. Prior to the 1971 census Statistics Canada provided data on an individual's ethnic origin (cultural group to which the paternal ancestor belonged upon arrival in North America), mother tongue and skill-related information on language ability (Can you speak English or French well enough to conduct a conversation? English only? French only? Both? Neither?).[22] For the census of 1971 a contextual question on language usage was added so that individuals were classified according to the language that was used most often in the home. Although the information from

this single question provided no insight into the degree and amount of family bilingualism or on the practice of diglossia within the families of a given region, it did give a more accurate measure of current language usage than data on mother-tongue population. Unfortunately the Act specified district designation according to mother-tongue population and to some critics this meant that areas could be so declared in which less than 10% of the minority were actually using their mother tongue. To some, this meant that in time only a relic ethnic population would exist and although the minority language would have disappeared the district would remain since the Act stated that such status was in perpetuity. This was criticism that had to be considered but it could not restrict the work of the Board. All language-related data was utilized by members to assure insight into patterns and processes of language shift experienced by official-language minorities. For some members, this exposure only intensified the dilemma. Of the ten members of the second Bilingual Districts Advisory Board, two did not sign the final report but chose instead to submit minority reports and two issued minority statements that specified areas of disagreement.[23] This was only one indication of the complexity of the issue of designation and of the difficulties that the members had in achieving consensus. One of the minority reports indicated that reliance upon mother-tongue data alone shackled a rational application of the Act. The recommendations contained in this minority report were based upon a sound analysis of all language-related data. The type of analysis that was employed warrants explanation.

Language-Related Data and the Designation of Language Zones in Canada

To illustrate the concentration of the francophone population of

Canada the distribution of language-related populations was mapped according to the ecumene of the country (fig. 3). The majority was situated between the cities of Moncton in eastern New Brunswick and Sudbury in Northern Ontario. The residual for each language-related group was located in small clusters in Maritime Canada, Southern Ontario and the Prairie Provinces. These were designated as "language islands". No attempt was made to designate language islands for people of mother tongue other than French or English as none had status as an official language. Similar language islands for people of English mother tongue were delimited within Quebec but these were relatively few. The majority of the anglophones of Quebec lived within the language zone that was to be designated as bilingual.

Further manipulation of the language-related data facilitated refinement of the distribution illustrated in figure 3 into a French language zone, an English zone and a bilingual zone in the area of transition between the two (fig. 1 and fig. 3). A designation of unilingual zones could have been accomplished by calculating the ratio of home-language population to mother-tongue population and converting the resultant to a percentage for each census division.[24] The association between the two populations as indicative of language retention, however, was considered tenuous. Although the calculation represented the persistence of mother tongue as language spoken within the home it provided no insight into what language was used most often outside the home. For example, within a census division where ninety percent of a French mother-tongue population used French as the language of the home it was conceivable that in the community it would be necessary to use English at work, at school, for entertainment, personal services and in stores. To determine the extensiveness

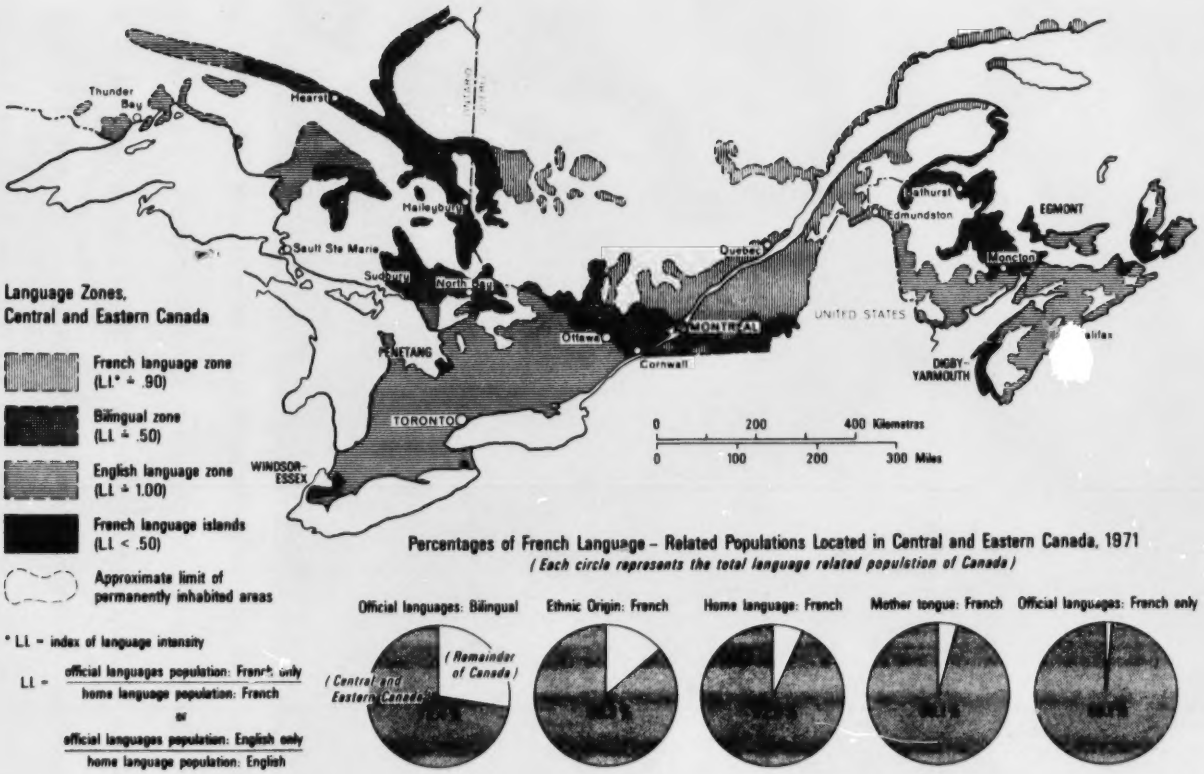

Figure 3. Language zones and regional concentration of French language populations, central and eastern Canada, 1971.

of the language within the community and to substantiate the designation of unilingual zones an index of language intensity was calculated for each census division. This index was devised by determining the ratio between the unilingual population, French or English, and the respective home-language populations. This was not converted to a percentage as interest was in the diversity of the language and not in the size or strength of the population who needed the language.

It was assumed that the application of this index to census divisions in which the ratio of home languge to mother tongue was high would provide an indication, albeit indirectly, of the ascendency of a second language within a community. In such a situation the index of language intensity would register close to zero (0.00) as the respondents giving French (or English) to the home-language question would have stated "both" to the official languages question. Conversely, if the language intensity index approached unity (1.00) the implication was that people were not required to learn a second language to obtain services beyond the home. The response to the official languages question would have been "unilingual" (French or English) allowing, of course, for those who had learned the second official language in school and felt that they had retained sufficient to at least "carry on a conversation". It was also assumed that when high values of language intensity coincided geographically with similar values for home language to mother tongue, language usage was ubiquitous in the community and one did not encounter a different language milieu upon leaving the home. When the tabulations were expressed cartographically it was possible to delimit more precisely the unilingual zones, English and French, with a zone of transition, the bilingual zone, situated between them in central and eastern

Canada.

It was within this bilingual zone that the designation of bilingual districts appeared to be warranted. Indeed there appeared to be a certain urgency for the French population of the zone. When the composition of the population capable of speaking both official languages was analyzed it was found that the majority were of French mother-tongue. This is a situation that Vallee and Dufour have referred to as unbalanced bilingualism.[25] Their research, applied to census divisions and rural and urban populations within the bilingual zone but beyond Quebec, identified the tendency for francophones to learn English while the majority of the anglophone population remained unilingual. The index of language intensity confirmed the findings of Vallee and Dufour both within and beyond the province of Quebec.

In eastern and northern Ontario and in northern and eastern New Brunswick the application of an index of language intensity to this portion of the bilingual zone revealed an apparent decline in language ubiquity with increasing distance from the core area of French Canada. For the francophones of northern New Brunswick the language intensity index was .63 but this declined to .35 for the three eastern counties of that province. The language intensity index for the anglophone population had a reverse trend with .70 in the northern counties and .90 for the eastern counties (fig. 3). In Ontario the pattern for the francophones was somewhat different; uniformly low throughout. For the anglophones it was uniformly high throughout (table 3).

Even within the province of Quebec, for those census divisions within the bilingual zone, the index of language intensity revealed a tendency toward unbalanced bilingualism for, in general, the index was low for francophones

TABLE 3

Population by Home Language, Official Language and Index of Language Intensity for Selected Census Divisions Within the Bilingual Zone, 1971

Census Divisions	Total Population	French Home Language	Official Languages: French Only	L.I. French	English Home Language	Official Languages: English Only	L.I. English
Northern New Brunswick:							
Gloucester	74,750	60,525	40,380	.67	14,130	9,635	.68
Restigouche	41,290	23,395	11,995	.51	17,815	13,035	.73
Eastern New Brunswick:							
Kent	24,900	19,975	9,090	.46	3,985	3,805	.95
Northumberland	51,560	11,905	6,035	.51	38,685	36,635	.95
Westmorland	98,665	35,665	8,345	.23	62,585	54,380	.87
Northern Ontario:							
Cochrane	95,840	42,835	14,610	.34	47,250	41,735	.88
Nipissing	78,865	21,425	5,790	.27	55,685	47,870	.86
Sudbury	198,075	52,175	11,130	.21	132,820	119,520	.90
Timiskaming	46,485	10,690	3,765	.35	34,320	30,725	.90
Eastern Ontario:							
Glengarry	18,840	7,300	1,790	.25	10,935	8,225	.75
Prescott	27,830	22,460	10,880	.48	5,230	3,260	.62
Russell	16,290	13,525	6,825	.50	2,690	43,235	.73
Stormont	61,300	16,885	3,205	.19	43,235	33,510	.78
Ottawa-Carleton	471,930	82,700	18,395	.22	366,265	323,080	.88

L.I. = Index of Language Intensity. Source: Census of Canada, Population Data.

TABLE 4

Population by Home Language, Official Language and Index of Language Intensity for Selected Census Divisions Within Bilingual Zone in Quebec 1971

Census Divisions	Total Population	French Home Language	Official Languages: French Only	L.I. French	English Home Language	Official Languages: English Only	L.I. English
1) Close to Civil Boundary:							
Pontiac	19,570	7,255	2,870	.40	11,950	9,885	.83
Gatineau	55,725	37,240	21,570	.58	17,805	12,300	.69
Hull	109,945	96,975	49,630	.51	11,575	6,155	.53
Argenteuit	31,320	21,795	13,835	.63	9,335	6,330	.68
2) Close to French Language Zone:							
Deux Montagnes	52,370	43,455	32,450	.75	8,575	5,565	.65
Compton	21,365	17,015	13,350	.78	4,310	3,050	.71
Chateauguay	53,735	33,355	21,570	.65	19,465	13,920	.72

Source: Census of Canada Population Data.

L.I. = Index of Language Intensity

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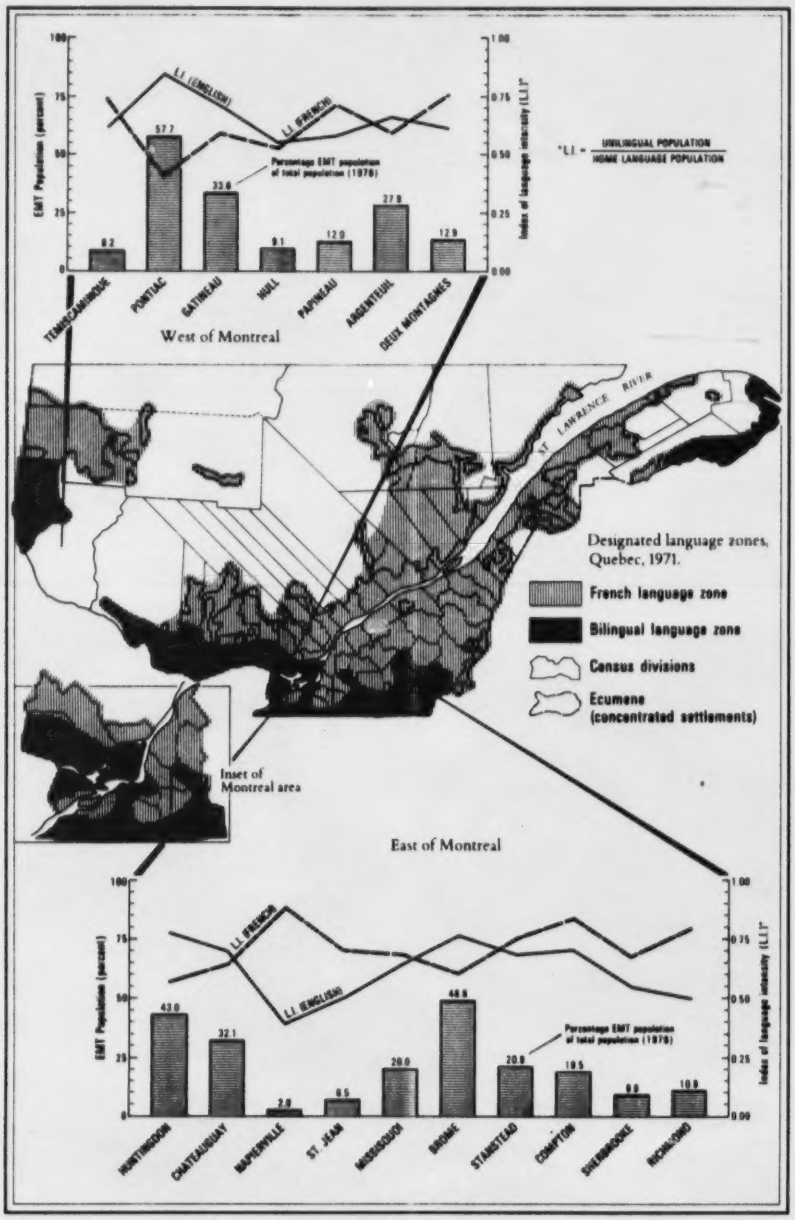


Figure 4. Index of language intensity, French and English (1971), with percentage English mother-tongue (EMT) population by counties (1976), for bilingual zone.

relative to their proportion to the total population (fig. 4). What was perhaps surprising was that for those counties that were closest to the French language zone the index was relatively high for the francophones but was also fairly high for the anglophones. This could be interpreted as further justification for the designation of bilingual districts to serve the minority anglophone population. With a high proportion of this minority retaining a unilingual English behaviour within a French milieu, federal services in both languages seemed essential (table 4).

From the map of language zones it appeared that the task of the Board was straightforward. All language islands in which the official-language minority constituted ten per cent, or more, of the total population a district could be recommended. Within the bilingual zone, districts could be proclaimed according to the patterns of concentration. Indeed the reports of the two Boards, the first in 1971 and the second in 1975, contained recommendations that were based essentially upon this pattern of distribution. At the time of writing, however, no districts had been proclaimed by the government of Canada in spite of the reports of the two Commissions and the apparent urgency described above. Although the concept of bilingual districts was retained the government appeared reluctant to act upon the recommendations of the two commissions. No official statement has been made by cabinet nevertheless it can be argued that the concept of bilingual districts for Canada had become discordant for both the bilingual zone and the language islands.

Bilingual Districts and the Bilingual Zone of Canada

An important geographical feature of this zone of transition between

French and English Canada is that it flanks the civil boundaries between Ontario and Quebec and New Brunswick and Quebec. It was here that the designation of bilingual districts seemed to be most appropriate until the efficacy of such territorial organization was altered by a change of government in the province of Quebec. In November, 1976 the Parti Québecois won the provincial election and formed a new government in Quebec. It was a party that was dedicated to separatism; to the creation of a new state in North America in which the French culture would be secure and protected from all anglicizing elements. One of the earliest laws enacted by the National Assembly was a new Official Language Charter.[26] Former language legislation was superseded by a Charter that was described as "the most farreaching and authoritarian legislation in the history of Quebec" and as, "a draconian law known as Bill 101".[27] Many federalists in Ottawa, anglophones and francophones, who had dedicated their efforts to the policy of two official languages for Canada felt betrayed by the move toward one official language in Quebec; an event that had occurred even before the victory of the separatist Parti Québecois. With this new government in power the mood for many shifted to one of hopelessness for a Canada in which French and English would be official languages in practice as well as under law.

The mood of the new provincial government and the attitudes toward the federal language policy were explicitly presented to the National Assembly and to the people of Quebec five months after the election. The Minister of State for Cultural Affairs provided his government's analysis of the situation of the French language in Quebec and the principles for a language policy.[28] In this policy-statement the efforts of the federal government to promote bilingualism were dismissed. Institutional bilingualism was interpreted as a "smoke

screen" but one that was unable to hide the fact that Canada was truly an English-speaking state. Institutions and the entire social fabric of Quebec were recognized as essential to the extension of the use of French. The new provincial programme was designed to give these elements a thoroughly French character.

> The Quebec we wish to build will be essentially French. The fact that the majority of its population is French will be clearly visible - at work, in communications and in the countryside. It will also be a country in which the traditional balance of power will be altered, especially in regard to the economy; the use of French will not merely be universalized to hide the predominance of foreign powers from the French-speaking population; this use will accompany, symbolize and support a reconquest by the French-speaking majority in Quebec of that control over the economy which it ought to have. To sum up, the Quebec whose features are sketched in the Charter (of the French language) is a French-language society.[29]

In the face of such a strong statement on sociocultural policy how relevant was the concept of bilingual districts? How would a federal authority rationalize the imposition of territorial units in Quebec within which people would have sanction to obtain services in a language other than French? To have done so would have strengthened the propaganda-arsenal of the separatists. The government of Quebec made it clear that if minority groups, including anglophones, were to be "...full-fledged Quebeckers..." they would accept their responsibility to develop Quebec's culture and to enrich the official language of the province. There was to be no doubt that if any public administration within the province remained officially bilingual, the insertion of French into

social life would remain a "pious wish". When placed in the context of the provincial government's language policy the federal concept of bilingual districts became an anathema. And yet equitable application of Canada's Official Languages Act required the designation of bilingual districts throughout the bilingual zone and, hence, on both sides of the provincial boundaries.

Language-Related Data and Language Islands

The majority of the English, mother-tongue population within Quebec (90% in 1976) was situated within the bilingual zone of the province. If bilingual districts were designated throughout that zone most of the anglophones would be guaranteed federal services in their mother tongue. Those who were located within the French language zone had traditionally enjoyed language rights that were envied by minority francophones in other provinces. It was in these minority communities beyond Quebec that there was a sense of gloom over the probability of continuance of the French language and culture. For that reason bilingual districts seemed admirably suited to provide not only federal services in French but to serve as an example for municipal and provincial governments.[31] Since education is under provincial jurisdiction in Canada, French-language elementary and secondary schools could help young francophones to maintain their mother tongue. Furthermore, citizens usually have contact with municipal authorities more frequently than with federal offices or agencies and the availability of French-language services at this level could encourage language usage beyond the home.

Various manipulations of census data illustrated the tendency toward linguistic decline within these language islands in favour of English. Those islands represented in table 5 had a population of French mother tongue that

TABLE 5

Language Tabulations for Francophone Populations
Within Selected Language Islands
1971

Language Islands	Total Population	F.M.T. Population	$\frac{\text{F.M.T.}}{\text{Total Population}}$	F.H.L. Population	$\frac{\text{F.H.L.}}{\text{F.M.T.}} \times 100$	L.I.*
Prince County, P.E.I.	42,080	6,005	10.0%	3,995	66.5%	.16
Yarmouth County, N.S.	24,685	7,785	31.5%	6,495	83.4%	.11
Windsor/Tilbury, Ontario	268,785	27,635	10.3%	13,250	47.9%	.12
Midland/Penetang, Ontario	29,040	5,405	18.6%	2,875	53.2%	.09
St. Boniface region, Manitoba	98,565	29,050	29.5%	22,975	79.1%	.12
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan	49,040	6,825	13.9%	4,205	61.6%	.12
St. Albert, Alberta	35,930	4,635	12.9%	2,140	46.2%	.11

Source: Census of Canada, Population Data.

* L.I.: Index of Language Intensity

was ten per cent or more of the total population. None was as high as within the bilingual zone, however. Similarly the proportion of the French mother-tongue population who used French as the language of the home was considerably less than in the bilingual zone for all but a few. When the language intensity index was calculated for these language islands results were so close to zero that there was no doubt that the francophones existed in a predominantly English milieu beyond the home. These calculations, however, provided some insight into the patterns of language usage for the minority enclaves for a specific time only. Language islands could be classified as English-language dominant, French-language dominant or bilingual but this would be applicable for a very narrow time span. Did this situation represent a trend that had existed for generations or was it associated with a significant change in population composition because population shifts were relatively sudden ? The ability to distinguish between these possibilities was considered significant in the application of bilingual-district status for a language island. Reference to mother-tongue components of the total population for earlier census periods permitted one only to allude to a trend in the incidence of language transfer. In fact the composition of the population could have altered becuase of migration and consequently calculations would have been made on different people. With the addition of the language-of-the-home question to the census of Canada in 1971, however, it became possible to provide cross-tabulations on four language-related questions and to produce a more reliable indicator of language transfer and to determine whether it could be classified as a trend. Through such tabulations a comparision was made to individual responses to the language-related questions of the census. This provided a person-orientation to the analysis of language

transfer and a fairly reliable approximation of the language behaviour of a population in a specific area over time.

The ethnic origin of a respondent was used as a basis for comparison with other responses to language-related questions in the census. If the answer to mother-tongue was the same as ethnic origin, language retention at least to the childhood of the respondent was signified. Current usage, at the time of the census, was provided through the home-language question. The response "bilingual" to the official-language question was taken to be indicative of degree 1 of language-loss in that when one person becomes bilingual it eliminates the necessity for an individual of another mother-tongue to learn a second language. If language transfer was evident through these cross tabulation it was considered to be a more reliable measure of language transfer than the straight comparison between the size of a mother-tongue population, or a home-language population, for various censal periods.

An individual of either French or English ethnic origin was placed in a degree-of-language-loss category, zero through four, according to the reply to each of the four language-related questions (fig. 5). The age groups provided further analysis for each "degree" to determine whether it was dominated by the older members of the community, the youngest or the predominantly wage-earner cohorts. Juxtaposition of histograms that represented the frequency of language loss for a representative area within the bilingual zone and a language island illustrated the extreme variation between the two situations.[33] The magnitude of degrees zero and one in the county of Gloucester, in northern New Brunswick (fig. 6), could not be attributed to the larger ethnic population alone although population size does foster and sustain various cultural organ-

Figure 5

Format to Determine
Degrees of Language Loss by Age-Groups

1.1 French

Q.15	Q.5	Q.17	Q.18		Ages:	Q.6			% of
EO	MT	HL	OL	Degree	under 20	21-40	41-60	over 60	total population
F	F	F	F	0	%	%	%	%	%
F	F	F	B	1	%	%	%	%	%
F	F	E	B	2	%	%	%	%	%
F	F	E	E	3	%	%	%	%	%
F	E	E	E	4	%	%	%	%	%
% total population					%	%	%	%	%

1.2 English

E	E	E	E	0	%	%	%	%	%
E	E	E	B	1	%	%	%	%	%
E	E	F	B	2	%	%	%	%	%
E	E	F	F	3	%	%	%	%	%
E	F	F	F	4	%	%	%	%	%
% total population									

SIGLA

F (French)

E (English)

B (French and English)

Q (Census Question No.)

Census Questions

Q.15: EO (Ethnic origin)

Q.5 : MT (Mother tongue)

Q.17: HL (Home Language)

Q.18: OL (Official Languages)

izations in any country. Language maintenance also reflected spatial features of minimal distance from the core area of French Canada (fig. 3), the potential for interaction with kin and kind within this core, and the exposure to French-language radio, television, and various publications. In spite of their minority position in this part of the bilingual zone, people of British ethnic origin demonstrated only slight propensity to learn the second official language (fig. 6). This was true throughout the bilingual zone. The magnitude of degree zero for both language groups indicated the lack of interaction within the county; one of whom was predominantly urban in location (English) and the other predominantly rural. The elements of geographical situation and the concomitant lack of opportunity for interaction with the core area of French Canada were manifested in the small proportion of the population of the Egmont electoral district, Prince Edward Island (fig. 7) who were categorized as belonging to degrees "zero" or "one" of language loss. Similar magnitudes in degree two and four were found in other language islands across Canada.

Unlike the bilingual zone, large urban centres near the language islands did not have a high proportion of francophones to total population. The probability of obtaining French-language services in cities that were dominated by English-language populations was low for the occupants of the French-language islands. To do comparison shopping, obtain personal or governmental services or to conduct business the francophones of the language-islands entered an English-dominated milieu; a feature of their situation that propelled most of this minority into degrees "two" and "four" of language loss.

With such evidence at hand it seemed that the government had been correct in maintaining bilingual districts as an essential part of its language

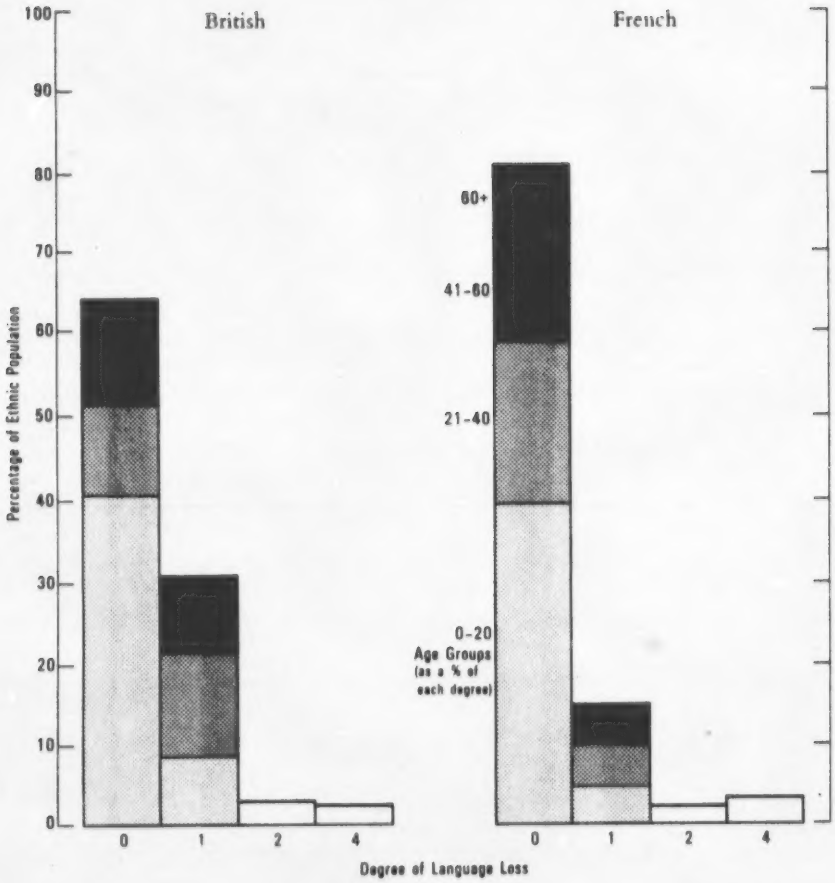


Figure 6. Degrees of Language Loss: Gloucester County, northern New Brunswick, 1971.

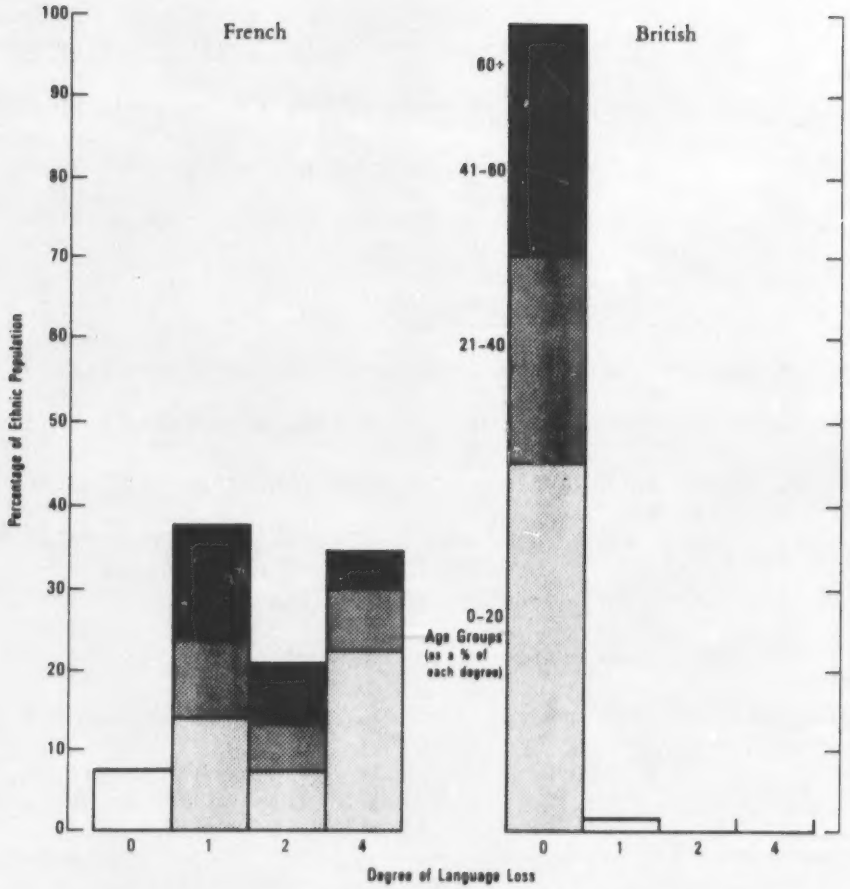


Figure 7. Degrees of Language Loss: Egmont Electoral District, Prince Edward Island, 1971.

legislation. If the trend toward language loss within French language islands was to be moderated the designation of districts appeared again to be urgent. In spite of this evidence the argument must be put forth a second time that bilingual districts may not suit the needs of the minority within language islands. There is a possibility that such designation would actually exacerbate the position of the francophones beyond Quebec and the bilingual zone.

Language Islands as Bilingual Districts

Throughout their term, members of the first and second Bilingual Districts Advisory Board visited communities that were being considered for district status or met with representatives of the linguistic minority from such areas. Occasionally the members encountered expressions of concern from several ethnic groups, including francophones, that bilingual-district designation would split their community. One statement by a member of the Board summarized a collective expression after several days of consultation in eastern Alberta.

> I suppose you could call it the 'western point of view' which tends to stress multiculturalism rather than biculturalism. In other words, to recognize the situation as it is in the western provinces...where the French fact, while it thrives, remains a very small proportion of the total population.[34]

In the same report the opinion was expressed that francophones felt that they did not need protection of language rights which would be given to them by the proclamation of bilingual districts. "They would be happy to have their services but they do not want to irritate fellow members of their community through a proclamation at this time."[35] Such a comment tended to confirm the fears expressed by the western M.P.s when Bill C-120 was before the special committee.

In Southern Ontario a similar attitude toward community harmony was found within two of the districts recommended by the Bilingual Districts Advisory Board; in the rural portion of the county of Essex and in the town of Penetanguishene and the neighbouring townships (fig. 3). A study was undertaken to gain a preliminary understanding of two French language islands with respect to patterns of French-language usage, the prospects for persistence of that language in each of the language islands and the attitudes among the population toward government policy on the language of the minority.[36] The latter is pertinent to the theme of this paper.

Since the Act provided an alternative way in which services could be provided in the two official languages, each respondent within the two language islands was asked to choose among three alternative statements to express their attitude:

1) The Windsor/Essex (or Penetang) region should be declared a permanent bilingual district for the purpose of providing federal government services in both French and English.

2) Federal services in both English and French should be provided but through other means than creating a bilingual district.

3) The federal government should not attempt to alter or improve the services that are currently available in French.

In every interview the relevant clauses of the Official Languages Act were explained to the respondent. Since both areas had been recommended for district status local newspapers had given intensive coverage on the issue. Respondents were relatively well informed on the choices provided.

For the purpose of tabulation and analysis the major categories of households were recognized as: (1) French Mother Tongue, (2) Mixed French and

TABLE 6

Responses to Questions on Bilingual District Issue

According to Mother Tongue Households,

Essex County and Penetang Region

	Essex Mother Tongue			Penetang Mother Tongue		
	F.M.T.	M.M.T.	E.M.T.	F.M.T.	M.M.T.	E.M.T.
Favour Bilingual District	43.3	28.4	18.8	45.1	29.5	28.4
Other Means	14.4	23.5	22.9	9.7	17.0	15.6
Status Quo	40.4	46.9	57.3	39.6	49.0	46.8
No Interest	1.9	1.2	1.0	5.6	4.5	9.2

F.M.T. = French Mother-Tongue Households

M.M.T. = Mixed Mother-Tongue Households

E.M.T. = English Mother-Tongue Households

English Mother Tongue, and (3) English Mother Tongue (table 6). In addition the first two categories were tabulated according to the language used most often in the home: French, both French and English or English (table 7).

In both language islands people of French mother tongue favoured district status over the status quo but not by a larger percentage. There was a greater magnitude between choices #1 and #3 for people of mixed mother-tongue households possibly reflecting resolution of conflict within the home to the community. The variation between the choices made by people of English mother tongue between Essex and Penetang may be explained by recent controversy in the former. A demand for a unilingual secondary school in Essex county had generated intense disagreement among ratepayers and was resolved only through an arbitrary decision by the Minister of Education that the school would be constructed regardless of the decision to the contrary by the Essex County Board of Education. This issue was front-page-news in French-language newspapers within Quebec during the months of conflict.

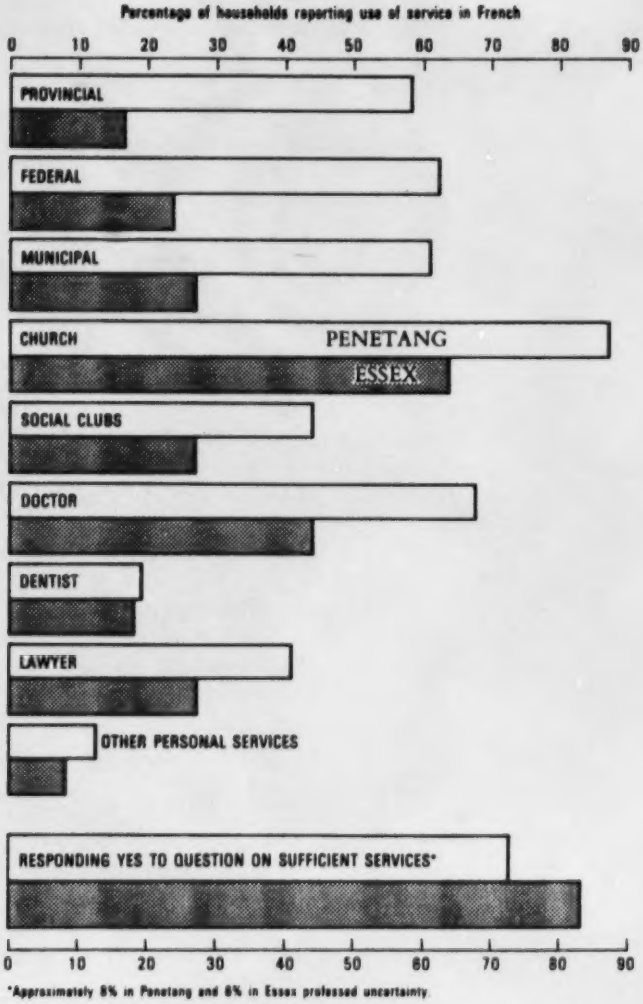
Disaggregation of the responses, by language of the home, seemed to support the conclusion that as the use of English in the home increased there was a shift toward a desire to maintain or accept the status quo with respect to the availability of French services (table 7). The apparent anomaly between the French, home-language population and the mixed, home-language population in favour of bilingual district status in Essex County may also be explained, in part, by the polarization that occurred within the community over the French-language school issue.

Before the questionnaires were administered it was determined that services in French were available for personal services (doctor, lawyer, dentist),

TABLE 7

Preferences for Language Services Among French Mother Tongue Population According to Home Language, Essex County and Pentang Region

	Favour Bilingual Status		Use Other Means		Favour Status Quo		No Interest	
	Essex	Penetang	Essex	Penetang	Essex	Penetang	Essex	Penetang
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
French Home Language	45.0	58.8	17.4	9.8	36.2	21.6	1.4	5.3
French and English Home Language	53.8	38.9	11.5	11.1	30.8	46.7	3.8	3.3
English Home Language	25.3	27.5	22.0	15.4	51.6	50.5	1.1	6.6



Number of French and mixed mother tongue households surveyed:

Penetang 223 Essex 182

Percentage of French and mixed mother tongue households using French in the home exclusively, predominantly, or in about equal proportions with English:

Penetang 60.1% Essex 48.9%

Figure 8. Use of services in French in Essex and Penetang, Ontario, c. 1974.

government services (federal, provincial, municipal) and institutional services (church, schools, social clubs) in the region. In spite of the availability of such services it was found that patterned evasion of language usage[37] was entrenched in both areas (fig. 8). Once the pattern of language usage beyond the home was established respondents of French mother tongue were asked if their families could obtain sufficient services in French. In the Essex area 82.7% of the respondents answered "yes" to this question, while 6.0% were uncertain as to the adequacy of services leaving only 11.3% who felt that such services were inadequate. In the Penetang region the percentages were 72.2%, 20.2% and 7.6% respectively. It seemed clear that the respondents either knew that such services were available or were unconcerned about greater availability. This seemed to be consistent with the generally low level of stated usage as illustrated in Figure 8.

In spite of the availability of services people of French mother tongue in both language islands developed the tendency to use their mother tongue for specific services and in specific places. Elsewhere they entered what they perceived to be an English-language milieu and functioned accordingly. This pattern developed over several generations and appeared to be entrenched within the community. It is possible that if the pattern was altered too suddenly and too drastically, as interpreted by the citizens, then the balance between and among the ethnic groups would become altered as well. The imposition of district status for a language island could provide this imbalance, could create disharmony rather than promote cooperation.

Conclusions

Through cross tabulations and various calculations of language-related data it was possible to delimit language zones that appeared suited to

the concept of bilingual districts. Since the promulgation of the Official Languages Act, however, the sociopolitical nature of Canada changed and the mood of the entire population became irresolute toward social policy related to services for the two, official-language populations. The government of Quebec expressed a mood of impatience with the evolution of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and cultural uncertainty as birth rates declined from the highest to the lowest in the country, fertility rates fell below the national average and gross reproduction rates fell below replacement.[38] It was conceivable that the bilingual zone was encroaching upon the French unilingual zone, in part, because most in-migrants to the province were attracted to Montreal and were opting for English as a second language rather than French.[39]

The first Official Language Act was passed by the government of Quebec in 1974[40] but was superseded by the language charter of the Parti Québecois in 1977; a document that was more pervasive than its predecesor. In the event that the referendum in Quebec on secession from Canada fails, no future provincial government will be able to abandon totally a policy to revitalize the French culture and to assure the survival of the language. Consequently, the declaration of bilingual districts within that portion of the bilingual zone that is situated within Quebec may always be interpreted as reinforcement of a language that already enjoys continental dominance. To apply districts only to the section of the bilingual zone that lies beyond Quebec could be interpreted as unbalanced concern for services to people of French mother tongue, catering to Quebec and incomplete application of the Official Languages Act.

Other provincial governments were as intransigent to the concept of bilingual districts for their minority communities as was the government of Quebec. Under the Act members of the Board were to consult with representatives of the provincial governments "...for the purpose of ensuring that, to the greatest practical extent, the limits of any area that may be established as a bilingual district... will be coterminous with any area similarly established or to be established in that province by such government".[41] Two of the governments consulted, Alberta and Ontario, declared that they were not in favour of bilingual districts and that if services were to be extended to the minority, official-language population within each province it would be through means other than districts.[42] This federal concept would set no example for these provincial governments. Indeed, Ontario seemed to be moving further from the recommendation of the B. and B. Commission that this province should declare an official-languages status because there was a strong concentration (numerically and geographically) of a francophone minority within its boundaries.

For well over a century, longer in central and eastern Canada, the language islands have accommodated to the dualism of French and English and, in western Canada, to a multicultural milieu. The decision by the federal government to superimpose district status could alter community harmony and generate conflict rather than maximize cooperation. The examples cited above, in which people within the minority-language enclaves expressed concern for this loss of harmony, were from only a few language islands but these were regionally selected and may very well have expressed representative attitudes. The designation 'bilingual district' carried with it the obligation of

job reclassification to 'bilingual' for those positions in which direct contact with the public occurred. Any threat to job security through such reclassification would generate resentment that could reverberate throughout a community. Furthermore, the minority francophones within language islands beyond Quebec suffered backlash from the national turmoil that was generated first through the declaration of French as the only official language of Quebec and secondly with the election of a separatist government in that province that produced a threat to the national unity of Canada. District status could exacerbate this mood of resentment.

If the concept of bilingual districts is no longer available to Canada because of sociopolitical changes that have occurred since the Official Languages Act was passed, that means can be used to aid the minority francophones beyond Quebec and anglophones within Quebec? The flexibility clause, article 9(2), of the Act presents one method whereby carefully selected services in both official languages could be established and extended. Various techniques could be applied to measure the impact that adjusted services would have upon spatial variations of language usage by the minority. There is also the advantage that the introduction of these services could be accomplished without the fanfare that accompanied the recommendations for bilingual districts contained in the reports of two advisory boards. The resources of the office of the Commissioner of Official Languages could be used to determine timing and extent for the implementation of federal services. In this way a perceived menace to job security could be minimized. Any local success that was achieved in

altering patterned evasion of language usage through the application of section 9(2) could provide greater incentive to provincial and municipal authorities to demonstrate their own concern and earnestness and thereby coordinate services in both official languages at all levels of government. The use value of this type of clause is the ability to accommodate to regional variations within the nation. Precise definitions of terminology within this section of the Act can only restrict its flexibility. If the clauses that are related to bilingual districts are amended out of the Official Languages Act[43] or, indeed, the Act itself is rescinded because official-languages status for French and English is incorporated into a new and patriated Canadian constitution, the flexibility clause (article 9(2)) could serve as a guideline.[44]

It has been suggested that Canada could employ as a model the official-languages accommodation that has been successful in another nation.[45] In response to this it is essential to emphasize that the pattern of distribution of the two official-language populations, the processes that were associated with the development of this pattern and the regional variations that are current in Canada are unique to this country. It is probable that we must develop our own model and structure a policy that is relevant to the Canadian situation alone. A bicultural Canada is feasible but the very nature of this huge nation with its dispersed and ethnically-varied population necessitates cautious and unique application of the Official Languages Act or its successor. It is within individual communities that patterns of language usage can be identified, urban and rural alignments established and, in consequence, the type of service that should be extended in both official languages.

The cooperation and empathy of the local population is more likely to be forthcoming if there is an awareness of the perceived needs of the minority and the precise patterns of cultural erosion that occur within the community. For example, in the two French-language islands of Essex and Penetang the people of French mother tongue, in general, had a high anticipation that their children would be able to retain their mother tongue. When asked how this would be accomplished their response, in order, was through French-language education and through usage in the home. If the need for a French-language school is identified because neighbours perceive it as something of value it may be more meaningful to the entire community than if the decision to build such an institution is made then superimposed by a department of the provincial government.

This assessment may be considered applicable to the bilingual zone of Canada as well. Although identified as the zone of transition between the French and English unilingual zones when it is analyzed through scale variation, ecumene patterns and rural to urban linkages it may be found that the zone consists of a number of "islands" that are in geographical proximity. The extension of services should have spatial as well as temporal components that will minimize conflict and maximize ethnic contact and cooperation. Through flexible and imaginative implementation of the Official Languages Act or a new Canadian constitution, "two solitudes" need not be a pending epitaph for Canada.

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> "Every department and agency of the Government of Canada and every judicial, quasi-judicial or administrative body or Crown corporation established by or pursuant to an Act of the Parliament of Canada has, in addition to but without derogating from the duty imposed upon it by subsection (1), the duty to ensure, to the extent that it is feasible for it to do so, that members of the public in locations other than those referred to in that subsection, where there is a significant demand therefor by such persons, can obtain available services from and can communicate with it in both official languages."

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37. Streib, G.F. "The Restoration of the Irish Language: Behavioral Aspects". Ethnicity, vol. 1, (1974) pp. 23-29.

38. Gauthier, Hervé Evolution Démographique du Québec, Office de planification et de développement du Quebec, août (1977).

39. Kralt, J. op. cit..

40. Assemblée Nationale du Québec, Projet de loi n° 22, "Loi sur la langue official". Sanctionne le 31 juillet (1974) Québec.

41. Official Languages Act, Canada, op. cit. article 15(2).

42. Minutes, Second Bilingual Districts Advisory Board, P.A.C.. See meetings with provincial governments (1972 and 1973).

43. On October 31, 1977 a private member's Bill was introduced in the House of Commons, Ottawa that would delete references to bilingual districts in the Official Languages Act. After passing first reading it (Bill C210) was withdrawn on February, 1978 and the subject matter was referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs (Debates, House of Commons, Ottawa, 1978, pp. 2677-2630). At the time of writing this matter was still "being considered" by that committee.

44. Robarts-Pepin Report, The Task Force on Canadian Unity: A Future Together, Observations and Recommendations. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services (1979).

45. McRae, Kenneth D. "Bilingual Language Districts in Finland and Canada: Adventures in the Transplanting of an Institution". Canadian Public Policy, vol. 4 (1978) pp. 331-351.